NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE EDUCATION OF IDIOTS. IDIOCY AND ITS TREATMENT BY THE PHYSIO-LOGICAL METHOD, By EDWARD SECRES, M. D. Frd. pp. 407. William Wood & Co. The importance of the subject of this treatise, the

deficiency of thorough and philosophical works upon fdlocy, and the acknowledged position of Dr. Seguin one of the first of living psychologists, give the volume now before us a more general interest than often pertains to medical writings. It is only within the present century that anything like a rational system has been pursued in the education of the unfortunate class to whose improvement the author of this book has devoted himself. Indeed, until the eminent French surgeon Itard undertook, in 1801, the education of a boy found running wild in the forest of Aveyron, and endeavored, following the philosophical theories of his master Condillac, to develop his intellectual faculties by means of sensations, no system at all was pursued by the few benevolent persons who now and then attempted to elevate the condition of ldiots, and if the poor creatures managed to learn a few things by rote it was all that anybody expected to them. Itard nearly discovered the right way to go to work when he set about teaching the savage of Aveyron; but he believed idlocy incurable, and residently as a savage of the sav Averrora; but he believed idicey incurable, and regarded the savege boy simply as entirely untaught. This is a way an unused to the ordinary food of men, and selected his victuals by the smell. When he wanted te drink he stretched himself at full length on the ground, and immersed his chin fit the water like a beast. He tore up all the ofbthes that were given him; tried constantly to escape; often walked on all fours; fought with his teeth; had no articulate language, and even appeared to lack the faculty of speech; gave few signs of intelligence; but was kind, complaisant, and fond of caresses. Hard began his training with no other purpose than "to solve the metaphysical problem of determining, what might be the degree of intelligence, and the nature of the ideas of a lad who, deprived from hirth of all education, should have lived entirely separated from the individuals of his kind;" in other words, to discover "the natural aprises of the human mind, obliterated in us by artificial culture." The method he first adopted was to endeavor to endear the boy to social life; to awaken his nervous sensibility by the most energetic stimulants and by quickening the affections of the soul: endeavor to endear the boy to social life; to awaken his nervous sensibility by the most energetic stimulants, and by quickening the affections of the soul; to extend the sphere of his ideas by creating new wants and multiplying his associations with surrounding beings; to lead him to the use of speech, by determining the exercise of infitation, under the spur of necessity; and to exercise, during a certain time, the simple operations of his mind upon his physical wants, and therefrom derive the application of the same to objects of instruction. This psychological method was well enough adapted to the education of a savage; but kard seems to have had a suspicion that savageness was not the only orther had to deal with; for, but Mard seems to have had a suspicion that savago-ness was not the only svil he had to deal with; for, in course of a year or more we find him framing a new programme, based upon physiological principles, ymbracing the development of the senses, the de-velopment of the intellectual faculties, and the de-telopment of the affective functions. He made no formal exposition of this system, and when, after six ears' partly successful labor, he discovered that his apil was not only a savage but an idiot, he believed

supil was not only a savage but an idnot, no beneved his pains all lost, and gave up in despair.

The credit of systematizing and putting into opera-tion Itard's crude ideas belongs to his pupil, Dr. Seguin. With a commendable modesty the doctor refrains from claiming the honor which is fairly his due, but his reputation is fortunately so well estab-lished that there is little danger of his services being overlooked. After several years of thorough research into the causes and philosophy of idiocy, Dr. Seguin opened a school for idiots in Paris in 1838, and was so successful that the school of the Bicèrre was placed under his charge, and the French Academy, whose semmittee had carefully tested his system, gave him a testimonial of their approval. After the revolution of 1845 he came to the United States, where, except turing one brief interval, he has since resided, assisting in the organization and improvement of various diot asylums.

Dr. Seguin starts from the principle that idiocy differs but little from a prolonged intancy. It is an arrest of certain functions of the mind and body baused by deficiency of nutrition in the fectus and the caused by deficiency of nutrition in the fectus and the new-born infant; and it may be, in a more or less complete measure, relieved by adapting the principles of physiology, through physiological means and intraments, to the development of the dynamic, perceptive, reflective, and spoutaneous functions of youth. We may classify these functions under the bree heads of activity, intelligence, and will; to raise the condition of the idiot all three must be educated, and we must show the most aftered distinct and mutually independent powers, but as agencies which act and react upon each other. The predominance of any of these functions is a disease; their perversion leads to insanity; their notable deficiency continues idiocy. Physiological education aims to relore the harmony of these functions. The first thing to be done in the training of an idiot is to correct the seficiencies and anomalies of motive power, which are always the most striking and injurious peculiari-

are always the most striking and injurious peculiari-ties of the disease. This is done by a mild course of symnastics, due care being had not to develop the muscular out of proportion to the nervous system. gymnastics, due care being had not to develop the muscular out of proportion to the nervous system. The spade, the wheelbarrow, the bow, the wooden horse, the hammer, and the ball, are generally more assent than heavy dumb-bells, parallel bars, or the ladder. If the pupil is subject to spasmodic movements of the hand, we seat him before us and concentrate all our attention upon securing perfect inimobility, because quiet must precede all regulated motion. To accomplish this we put the quietest hand on the corresponding knee, and load the other with a heavy dumb-bell, classing his fingers with our own, to that he cannot let the weight fall. When we find the hand temporarily subdued we release it, and lay it on the other ince. After a few turns of successive loading and resting we generally succeed in keeping the hand still enough for the simplest employments. If, on the contrary, the child is ibert we pursue the opposite course. If the legs do not bend, we make them more under the clasticity of a baby-jumper; if the feet do not come forward to make steps, we let them encounter the regular motion of a spring-board. The muscles may be kneaded, and the articulations made pliable by handling; or a contrivence in the name of a tread-mill may be employed. The muscular thrength for walking having been thus acquired, we place the pupil on two blocks or steps as narrow as its feet; we even permit him to fall gently, to show him the nacessity of straining his muscles to keep in an apright position. Other blocks or steps are now blaced in front of him, and with the prospect of escaping from his isolation he will, with a little help at first, him the necessity of straining his muscles to keep in an upright position. Other blocks or stops are now blaced in front of him, and with the prospect of escaping from his isolation he will, with a little help at first, by to pass one foot to the next step, and so on. Thus be begins to walk, but left on the floor he would probably have never got beyond a sliding movement of the feet. The equilibrium of the walk must now be acquired by a careful training of the arms, and two kinds of exercises are to be followed alternately, first, those which bear upon the legs and arms, and second those which harmonize the movements of the members. Stairs of various grades, a horizontal tadder, between the bars of which the pupil has to walk, dumb-bells, clubs, &c., are among the appliances of the former; for the latter we have a room or a piece of shaded ground in which are aggregated all hinds of surfaces, smooth and rough, stony and slippery, narrow, abrupt, level, aloping in various direc-

Ances of the former; for the latter we have a room or a piece of shaded ground in which are aggregated all pinds of surfaces, smooth and rough, stony and all-pinds of surfaces, smooth and rough these surfaces, and surfaces, smooth and rough these surfaces the surfaces and surfaces are surfaces. The throw him into the company of other children who perform the same exercisus on a large scale, and what he did being with the surfaces of comotion. We give our attention to the surfaces of the surfaces. The surfaces of the surfaces. The surfaces of the

him holding his hands long enough in the desired position to make him feel what it is we require. After a time he is to be placed in full view of a group of children imiteting motions that are made for them. Motions of different limbs, of the whole body, of the eyes, lips, tongue, etc., are taught in succession, and special attention is paid to the organs whose action is most defective. Thus the child is gradually brought to realize that every part of the body may be called upon to answer the summons of an external will, and

set be at all times ready, and this sense imparts to the countenance sooner or later, a permenent expres-

sion of intelligence.

The next thing is to educate the senses, and the first to be trained is the sense of touch, because it is the most general, all the other senses being in fact only modifications of it. The same principles which we have traced in the parts of Dr. Seguin's system already described, are followed in the improvement of these functions, as well as of the faculty of speech, and the memory and imagination. The foundation of the Doctor's method is the principle of comparison, which he designates as "nature's own method of teaching mankind." He makes great use of music, of drawing (for which many idiots have a decided sptilrawing (for which many idiots have a decided apti-

thde), and of object lessons.

He next passes on to the moral freatment of the patient, defining this branch of education to be "the systematic action of a will upon another in view of its improvement." Punishment is to be avoided until it is certain that the understanding of the wrong preceded its commission. Rewards and caresses must also be given very cautiously, because when injudiciously spplied they break the continuity of efforts begun and cause a diversion from set tesks and a relaxation of the will. What the pupil will not do at the command of the teacher, he will often imitate from the actions of another child. So idiots, however incapable, can be made to act efficiently one upons another if we know tude), and of object-lessons. of another child. So idiots, however incapable, can be made to act efficiently one upon another if we know how to oppose the vivacious to the immebile, the lequacious to the mute, the imitative to the careless, the affectionate to the indifferent. Nevertheless obedience must be taught, though severity is to be avoided; and Dr. Seguin gives some very curious details of the careful method by which the teacher ought to give emphasis to his commands—his looks, his gestares, his attitude, even the position of his feet, helping to enforce the directions given by his lips. Concurrently with the teaching of obedience the master must begin to use the gentler forms of inducement which conduct the child gradually from passive subjection to earnest telf-government. The appetite is conquered and made to conduce to moral and mental improvement. As the patient makes progress and comes out of "the first and nearly despairing period of his training," he is taught to work for a short and comes out of "the first and nearly despairing period of his training." he is taught to work for a short time every day—in no case more than four or five hours out of the twenty-four, and always with some definite object; and as much time as possible is devoted to what Dr. Seguin calls the most sensible of our duties, that of making the pupils merry by sports, games, music, dancing, and theatrical performances. The development of the sense of affection, which the author well says is the end of his teaching as it was its beginning, must be through the power of love. We must teach the child that he is loved, and make him eager to love in his turn.

must teach the child that he is loved, and make him eager to love in his turn.

Dr. Seguin describes in detail what an institution for the training of idiots ought to be, and cites a number of interesting cases, many of them from his own practice, showing the results of his system, and throwing light upon certain of the causes of idiocy which deserve the careful attention of parents. His treatise is a valuable contribution both to science and whilestheory, and we can hardly say more in its philauthropy; and we can hardly say more in its praise than that it is worthy of the distinguished reputation of its author.

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640 BROADWAY, corner Bleecker et. 640 BROADWAY, corner Bleecker et. 640 BROADWAY, corner Bleecker st. 640 BROADWAY, corner Bleecker et. 640 BROADWAY, corner Bloceker et.

461 EIGHTH AVE., north corner Thirty-fourth-st. 61 EIGHTH-AVE., north sorner Thirty-fourth-st. 661 BIGHTH-AVE., north somer Thirty fourth-st.

199 SPRING-ST. 200 SPRING-ST. 299 SPRING-ST.

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